

**We claim:**

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1. A computer implementable system for allocation and pricing of classified resources of a web server farm to customers by a resource center comprising means for providing different levels of service by dynamically allocating and pricing said resources based on customers' changing needs, and their willingness to pay.

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2. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means for dynamically allocating and pricing resources is through mutual negotiations between said customers and said resource center either through electronic communication means or otherwise.

3. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means comprising:

- mechanism for conducting an online auction of said resources by the resource center in case of non-availability of adequate idle resources to meet a customer request followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on the results of the auction of resources.
- mechanism for conducting an online auction of resources at pre-specified intervals of time followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on results of the auction of resources.
- mechanism for publishing the current prices for each class of resources

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at any point of time and means for updating the current prices dynamically based on requests for release or acquisition of resources by customers, followed by updating of billing information.

5 the arrangement being such that said mechanisms operate either individually or together in any combination of at least two mechanisms depending upon the requirement.

4. A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said mutual online negotiations can take place between software-based agents representing said customers and said resource center.

5. A system as claimed in claim 4 further including,

- means enabling the customers to provide price and service level related inputs to their respective software-based agents,
- means for said software-based agents representing customers to monitor the usage of resources allocated to them and the levels of service being obtained, and
- means for said software-based agents representing customers to use said inputs from said customers and said usage and/or said levels of service being obtained to dynamically determine when to request the software agent representing the resource center for acquiring or releasing resources at various prices.

20 6. A system as claimed in claim 3, wherein said current prices comprise the current price at which resources are allocated to customers, the new price that

would prevail if specified units of resources are released by customers and the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are acquired by the customers.

5 7. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein each class of resources has some units dedicated to specific customers and the remaining units can be dynamically allocated to customers by the resource center.

10 8. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said resources in a resource center includes servers, storage media, software applications and bandwidth of communication link connecting said servers center to a network.

15 9. A method for allocating and pricing classified resources of a web server farm to customers by a resource center comprising providing different levels of service by dynamically allocating and pricing said resources based on said customers' changing needs, and their willingness to pay.

20 10. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said dynamic allocation and pricing of resources is through mutual negotiations between said customers and said resource center either through electronic communication means or otherwise.

25 11. A method as claimed in claim 9 further comprising  
- conducting an online auction of said resources by the resource center in case of non-availability of adequate idle resources to meet a customer request followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on the results of the

auction of resources,

- conducting an online auction of resources at pre-specified intervals of time followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on results of the auction of resources, and
- publishing the current prices for each class of resources at any point of time and means for updating the current prices dynamically based on requests for release or acquisition of resources by customers, followed by updating of billing information.

the arrangement being such that said steps operate either individually or together in any combination of at least two steps depending upon the requirement.

12. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said mutual online negotiations can take place between software-based agents representing said customers and said resource center.

13. The method as claimed in claim 12 further including,

- enabling the customers to provide price and service level related inputs to their respective software-based agents,
- enabling said software-based agents representing customers to monitor the usage of resources allocated to them and the levels of service being obtained, and
- enabling said software-based agents representing customers to use said inputs from said customers and said usage and/or said levels of service being obtained to dynamically determine when to request the software agent representing the resource center for acquiring or releasing

resources at various prices.

14. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said current prices comprise the current price at which resources are allocated to customers, the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are released by customers and the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are acquired by the customers.

15. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein each class of resources has some units dedicated to specific customers and the remaining units can be dynamically allocated to customers by the resource center.

16. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said resources in a resource center includes servers, storage media, software applications and bandwidth of communication link connecting said servers center to a network.

17. A computer program product comprising computer readable program code stored on computer readable storage medium embodied therein for enabling allocation and pricing of classified resources of a web server farm to customers by a resource center characterized in that, it includes a computer readable program code means configured for providing different levels of service by dynamically allocating and pricing said resources based on customers' changing needs, and their willingness to pay.

18. A computer program product as claimed in claim 19, wherein said computer readable program code means configured for dynamically allocating and pricing resources is through mutual negotiations between said customers and

said resource center either through electronic communication means or otherwise.

19. A computer program product as claimed in claim 17 further comprising:

- computer readable program code means configured for conducting an online auction of said resources by the resource center in case of non-availability of adequate idle resources to meet a customer request followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on the results of the auction of resources.
- computer readable program code means configured for conducting an online auction of resources at pre-specified intervals of time followed by re-allocation of said resources to said customers, updating of billing information and pricing based on results of the auction of resources.
- computer readable program code means configured for publishing the current prices for each class of resources at any point of time and means for updating the current prices dynamically based on requests for release or acquisition of resources by customers, followed by updating of billing information.

the arrangement being such that said computer readable program code means operate either individually or together in any combination of at least two computer readable program code means depending upon the requirement.

20. A computer program product as claimed in claim 18, wherein said mutual online negotiations can take place between software-based agents representing said customers and said resource center.

21. The computer program product as claimed in claim 20 further including,

- computer readable program code means configured for enabling the customers to provide price and service level related inputs to their respective software-based agents,
- computer readable program code means configured for said software-based agents representing customers to monitor the usage of resources allocated to them and the levels of service being obtained, and
- computer readable program code means configured for said software-based agents representing customers to use said inputs from said customers and said usage and/or said levels of service being obtained to dynamically determine when to request the software agent representing the resource center for acquiring or releasing resources at various prices.

22. A computer program product as claimed in claim 19, wherein said current prices comprise the current price at which resources are allocated to customers, the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are released by customers and the new price that would prevail if specified units of resources are acquired by the customers.

23. A computer program product as claimed in claim 17, wherein each class of resources has some units dedicated to specific customers and the remaining units can be dynamically allocated to customers by the resource center.

24. A computer program product as claimed in claim 17, wherein said resources in a resource center includes servers, storage media, software applications and bandwidth of communication link connecting said servers center to a network.

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